

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**

# Endangered Species

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## Spectacled Eider (*Somateria fischeri*)

**Designation:** Threatened

Spectacled eiders spend most of the year on marine water where they feed primarily on clams. They nest on coastal tundra near shallow ponds or lakes, usually within 10 feet of the water. After breeding, they move offshore to molt. After molting, eiders from all breeding populations migrate to the central Bering Sea south of St. Lawrence Island, where they remain in large flocks until March or April.

**Critical Habitat:** Critical habitat was designated for molting in Norton Sound and Ledyard Bay; for nesting on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta; and for wintering south of St. Lawrence Island.

**Distribution:** There are three breeding populations, two in Alaska and one in Russia.

**Threats:** Reasons for initial population decline and range contraction are unknown. Ingestion of lead shot, predation, and harvest may currently be limiting population growth. Research continues to better understand the life history and needs of these birds.

**Conservation efforts:** Education of hunters and substitution of lead shot with steel shot is an ongoing effort. The Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward, Alaska, maintains a small, captive population of spectacled eiders for research and development of captive propagation techniques.

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[U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Species Profile](#)

- [Photo Gallery](#)
- [Range Map](#)
- [Fact sheet](#)
- [Protocol for Handling Dead Spectacled and Steller's Eiders, July 2010](#)

Last updated: June 7, 2012

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